Project Title: Teaching and learning compassion, courage and cultural competence

Key Words: compassion, courage, cultural competence, learning, teaching, nursing

Brief Description
The recently published vision and strategy for nursing, midwifery and care staff, entitled ‘Compassion in Practice’ (DH 2012), identifies compassion, courage and competence (from hereon referred to as cultural competence) as three of its 6 essential values for these professions.

Most people agree that culturally competent compassionate care must be the heart of nursing and midwifery care; many nursing and midwifery teachers will argue that these values underpin their school’s curricula. However, there are no known teaching resources -examples/ methods/ packages- that have been systematically evaluated to be used by teachers to show that students have become able to provide culturally competent and compassionate care in practice. At the same time assessing students’ application of their learning of culturally competent compassion in practice is a major challenge and validated reliable tools which represent the realities of the 21st century do not exist.

Courage, is a value which is closely related to compassion and cultural competence. To create the culture which promotes patient safety and dignity – as emphasised in the new vision and strategy- a student needs to learn how to be courageous and how to use courage wisely. Judging by the lack of literature on courage one can safely assume that: a) this is not an area of learning included in the curriculum, b) teachers have not been equipped to deal with it, and c) there is next to nothing in terms of teaching resources. This project aims to research this area with the aim of devising appropriate teaching resources and approaches.

Relevant Publications:
Commissioning Board Chief Nursing Officer and DH Chief Nursing Adviser (2012) Compassion in Practice. DH.


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